

# LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION:

## 56-HOUR WORK WEEK STUDY

Reviewing Past, Present, and Future Implications  
of a Highly Compressed Work Schedule

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# Executive Summary

The Probation Oversight Commission was called upon by the Board of Supervisors and the public to launch an in-depth study of the 56-hour work week, a highly compressed work schedule that is currently utilized to staff Probation's detention facilities referred to as "Camps".

In the last five years, there have been many calls for discussion about the 56-hour work week that lacked a transparent and thorough exploration of its implications for youth, Probation staff, the LA Model, and the Probation Department. The schedule deviates from the way best staffing practices are envisioned for the implementation of reform efforts, which has resulted in calls for the schedule's elimination.

Through interviews and research, it was found that the schedule has some clear merits that coexist alongside its flaws. These benefits include the availability of staff to perform emergency response and evacuation in the middle of the night, allowing staff to be reassigned to different facilities with relative ease due to the minimized commute, and the perception that the schedule supports a healthy work/life balance and allows the recovery time needed to supervise youth in detention. Other topics that require further research may confirm additional benefits, including whether the utilization of the 56-hour work week results in decreased absences, less overtime, and therefore less disruption to youth and lower costs to the County.

During the course of interviews, problems were also identified associated with the 56-hour work week. Nearly all issues raised were systemic, obstacles resulting from a lack of attention and initiative on behalf of the Probation Department, despite repeated identification of the same issues in studies that have called for many of these troubles to be addressed. Additionally, some of the concerns raised affect service delivery and quality across all detention facilities, not just those staffed using the 56-hour work week.

The core issue and question that emerged is whether the LA Model, the Board-adopted best practice model which is to guide the future of Probation services, can be fully implemented while the 56-hour work week is still in place at Probation's camp facilities. Based on this research, the POC recommends that Probation study and determine whether the 56-hour work week allows sufficient participation in the activities meant to support a therapeutic milieu and better outcomes for the youth of Los Angeles County. If the schedule poses any barrier to full implementation of the LA Model, a reduced footprint of the 56-hour schedule is called for. Furthermore, Probation has a responsibility to youth and its staff to negotiate an exit plan for those individuals who are either not willing or not interested in implementing practice change that aligns with providing a therapeutic setting for detained youth.

# Introduction

The 56-hour work week schedule has been utilized by the County of Los Angeles Probation Department (Probation) for at least the last 50 years. Today, the schedule is used to staff five juvenile detention facilities: Camp Clinton B. Afflerbaugh (Afflerbaugh), Camp Vernon Kilpatrick (Kilpatrick), Camp Joseph Paige (Paige), Camp Glenn Rockey (Rockey), and Camp Joseph Scott (Scott), which is currently housed at the Dorothy F. Kirby Center. The Probation Oversight Commission (POC) has set forth, at the direction of the Board of Supervisors, to study the schedule and understand its history and implications, resulting in this reference report. From the outset of this work, the POC aimed to present a comprehensive view of the 56-hour work week centered around the commission's stated responsibility to "enhance the overall care, safety and well-being of all individuals interacting with Probation"<sup>1</sup> with an additional emphasis on making recommendations meant to minimize harm to youth that have no choice but to receive these services since they have been ordered to detention.

The history of the schedule is opaque. At the outset of this record gathering, the POC attempted to gain input both from Probation and labor unions to gather historical data, discuss the current extent and implications of the schedule, and understand any favorable or unfavorable views of the schedule. Both Probation and labor unions reported that due to the most current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) having expired at 12:00 midnight on January 31, 2021, pending negotiations prohibited official discussion with the POC.<sup>2</sup> Beyond the MOU's limited description of the schedule's utilization in Probation's camp facilities, no other documentation was found that provided any historical documentation nor qualitative description of the schedule. This lack of documented transparency around the schedule mirrored the information outcomes of the Probation Reform Implementation Team (PRIT) that preceded the POC, when they also attempted to verbally explore the merits of the schedule with Probation and labor unions.<sup>3</sup> The negotiation periods, which for at least the last two cycles tend to be more lengthy than active MOU periods themselves, has served as a barrier to information gathering on this issue for years.

In the last few years, several reports have called either for further examination or the termination of the 56-hour work week schedule outright.<sup>4,5</sup> First, the lack of appropriate and adequate sleeping quarters at Kilpatrick called into question Probation's ability to move youth there even when Board of Supervisors' motions have called for it. Most commonly, the issue posed is that the 56-hour work week

<sup>1</sup> [Probation Oversight Commission > Home \(lacounty.gov\)](#) Accessed April 19, 2022

<sup>2</sup> [1031024\\_701.pdf \(lacounty.gov\)](#) Accessed March 3, 2022

<sup>3</sup> [PRIT Special... - Los Angeles County Probation Reform and Implementation Team | Facebook](#) Accessed February 22, 2022

<sup>4</sup> [LAPGS Final Report.pdf \(rdaconsulting.com\)](#) Accessed May 4, 2022

<sup>5</sup> [culture-of-care-long-final.pdf \(lacounty.gov\)](#) Accessed May 4, 2022

does not allow for consistency for youth in the same way an eight-hour schedule would. This standard is reportedly impeding full implementation of the best practices model, the LA Model, that has been selected as the course forward to improving the quality of services delivered by Probation. Issues surrounding consistency and best practice were raised in all interviews, with most interviewees reflecting on the complicated nature of attempting to compare the different detention environments. A wealth of insight was offered by those individuals that had experience working at both the Dorothy Kirby Center, the only long-term detention site not currently utilizing the 56-hour work week schedule, in addition to other camp settings. Nearly all current and retired Probation staff interviewed had experience working both the 56-hour work week and other schedules in juvenile hall and field supervision settings. It is also important to highlight that while juvenile halls are not meant to be long term detention facilities, historically, some youth spend months and even years, in these settings awaiting disposition or transfer to adult court.

Through the course of this study, fundamental truths emerged; the most poignant of which is that the 56-hour work week is not the sole inhibitor of engaged, trauma-focused services that reforms aim to bring into Probation's camp facilities. It became clear that many of the issues raised faulting the schedule for inconsistencies and the varied quality of staff interactions with young people were more clearly attributable to the systemic issues of a department that has not followed through with a committed training and coaching strategy at an intensity sufficient to effect culture change within each of its detention facilities, let alone at a departmental level.

This is not to say that the schedule does not pose barriers to the implementation of various projects as currently planned, including most importantly, the LA Model. However, through research and interviews conducted, repetition of the precedent of Probation to not follow through with comprehensive and developed training plans that include a quality improvement process and measurement of implementation and fidelity after training, the POC does not have the confidence to believe that the department would be able to fully implement and keep fidelity to the LA Model by simply ending the 56-hour work week.

# Methods

As written history for the utilization of the 56-hour work week by the Los Angeles County Probation Department was limited, the bulk of information for this study was obtained through interviews. To ensure a diversity of interviewees, the POC sought interviews with any individuals with knowledge of the schedule and its implications, who were willing to make remarks on the subject. The POC made a participant recruitment announcement at the March 10, 2022 monthly POC meeting, and further disseminated flyers to Probation, the Department of Mental Health (DMH), and Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) in an attempt to identify any potential interviewees who had current or past experience working, supervising, or partnering with those working the schedule. Though Probation’s administrative leadership did not offer an official interview or position on the schedule, they facilitated unfettered access to their facilities and staff. To make interviews more accessible to Probation staff and co-located partners, the POC visited the following facilities to offer on-site interviews:

<b>FACILITY VISIT SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>DATE OF VISIT</b>	<b>FACILITY NAME</b>
<b>3/9/2022</b>	<b>Dorothy Kirby Center/Camp Scott</b>
<b>3/16/2022; 3/25/2022</b>	<b>Camp Afflerbaugh</b>
<b>3/21/2022</b>	<b>Campus Kilpatrick</b>
<b>3/24/2022</b>	<b>Camp Paige</b>
<b>4/6/2022</b>	<b>Camp Rockey</b>


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Additional steps were taken to reach potential youth interviewees with any prior lived experience of detention in a facility where the 56-hour work week was, or currently is, utilized. In partnership with the Department of Mental Health, the flyer was sent to all Intensive Field Capable Clinical Services contracted providers, who often serve Probation involved youth. Additionally, the recruitment flyer was sent to Los Angeles Youth Uprising for further dissemination to any prospective youth.



In total, 72 interviews were conducted with a variety of current and retired Probation line staff, Supervising Detention Services Officers (SDPO), administrators, DMH, Juvenile Court Health Services (JCHS) staff, Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) staff, community-based advocates, and youth with lived experience. Three additional participants submitted written responses to the questions below which were provided via email. The one area where interviews were truly lacking despite the level of outreach was in the number of youth interviews, with a single youth participating in the study. Base questions were developed to ensure an open-ended dialogue with interviewees, and interviewers asked follow-up questions if clarification was needed to understand the issues interviewees felt were most important to raise. There was an outpouring of comments and suggestions about the level of support Probation staff receive and what is needed from the department to enhance the work performance and wellness of staff.

The following questions were asked in all non-youth interviews:

- What are the benefits for staff to have a 56-hour work week?
- What are the benefits for youth when staff have a 56-hour work week?
- What are any drawbacks or consequences for staff to have a 56-hour work week?
- What are any drawbacks or consequences for youth when staff have a 56-hour work week?
- What does the Probation Department do to promote the well-being of staff to support the work that they are asked to do?
- What should the Probation Department do to promote the well-being of staff to support the work that they are asked to do?

For the youth that participated in an interview, the following questions were asked:

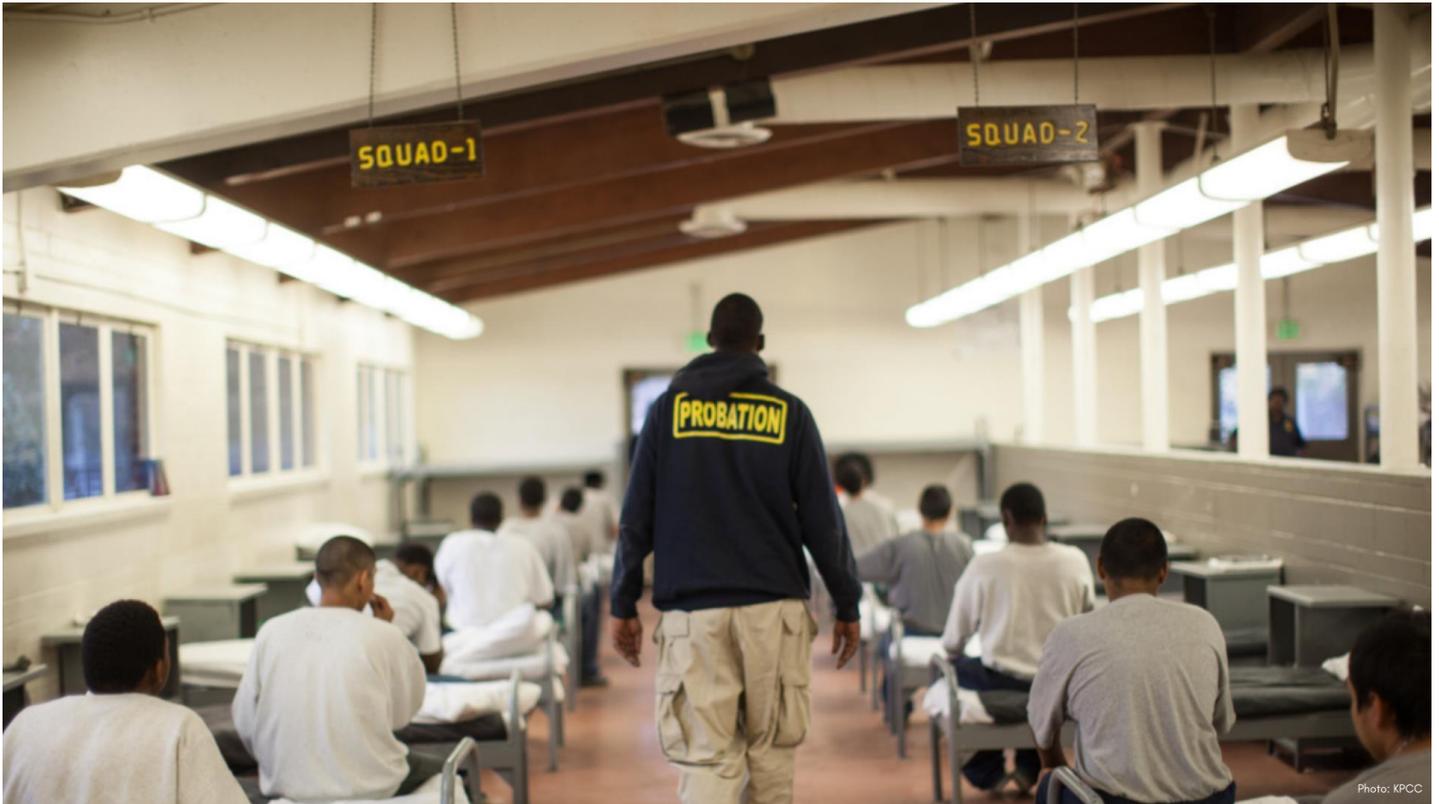
- Have you ever spent any time at a Probation camp other than the Dorothy Kirby Center?
- Can you tell me about the differences between a typical day at camp versus a day at any other probation detention facilities?
- When you were at camp, did you know who your assigned staff was? How did you know? Did you know when you could expect them to be at the camp?
- What did you do at camp when you needed to talk to somebody outside of probation like mental health or the nurse? Was this process different when your assigned staff/probation officer was there or not there? Was this process different at all during the night or day?
- Are there any differences between the ways the staff at camp and staff at other facilities treated young people?
- Since staff at the camps are there for two and a half days, did you feel like they got to know you as easily as staff at the other facilities? Can you give any examples of this?
- Did you have more or less activities or program at camp than at the other facilities? Do you have any ideas about why?
- Are there any other differences between staff at camps versus other facilities that we have not discussed that you would like to share?

Outreach and additional interviews were also conducted with 33 separate Probation jurisdictions outside of Los Angeles County to capture information on schedules used in states and counties that shared any number of similarities, including county land area size, population, and landscape. All ten Probation departments in California counties geographically larger than the county of Los Angeles were contacted. A search of the largest counties in the contiguous United States of America by land mass and population prompted contact of the remaining 23 Probation departments.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Hawaii had no counties with a comparable/larger land area or population to include. Alaska does not have counties but rather, boroughs. Although Alaska has numerous boroughs larger than Los Angeles County, due to the complicated nature of understanding borough organization and the non-comparable population size, Alaska was excluded from outreach.

Bodies of peer reviewed research were utilized to illustrate points around anecdotal information shared during interviews. Discovery of relevant topics that were not emphasized in many interviews were also made through the literature review process and are included in the findings.



## Interview Themes and Research Findings

### Schedule Overview

The 56-hour work week is a highly compressed work schedule assigned to Probation employees with the title of Deputy Probation Officer I (DPOI), Deputy Probation Officer II (DPOII), or Supervising Deputy Probation Officer (SDPO) which takes place over the course of three consecutive days, with three distinct shifts taking course over the span of a single week. The work week is comprised of three working days of a combination of staff assigned to work either two 16-hour days followed by an eight-hour day, or an eight-hour day followed by two 16-hour days. Employees on the first day of the shift start their day either at 6:00 AM or 2:00 PM. Individuals that start their day at 6:00 AM begin their first 16-hour day, and individuals that start at 2:00 PM begin their week with an 8-hour day. A schedule is set prior to the beginning of the week to determine total time a staff is "on board",

or directly providing supervision to youth, and is also a means of scheduling breaks, meant to give staff ample time to complete casework notes, court reports, incident reports, and to have restful time set aside from face-to-face engagement with youth. At the end of the day, staff retire to small rooms, in most cases on the grounds of the facility, and sleep. Per staff reports, when sufficient staffing allows for it, there is also a scheduled staggering of workday end times to ensure that staff get enough sleep. When possible, some staff will be relieved around 9:00pm and will then attend to the supervision of youth by 6:00am the following morning and those that are with youth until 10:00pm when Group Supervisor, Nights (GSN) arrive are given until 7:00am.

### Routine Consistency

Concerns about the schedule prior to the outset of this study were acknowledged during most interviews: in particular, consistency issues between shifts and excessive tiredness of staff at the end of a day's work. During interviews, participants noted that differences between temperament and culture of each shift affected consistency in procedures and behavioral expectations of youth. Three common descriptions of shift cultures as described by interviewees were (1) those that were more relationship and attachment focused, (2) those that were inclined toward strict structure, and (3) those that were described as overly permissive or lax. Nearly all interviewees discussed that the tone and culture of each shift is typically set by the supervisor of that shift. Line staff (DPOIs and DPOIs) described the most functional shifts as those that have a SDPO with a more proactive style, who regularly spend time with staff and youth, explore and build upon the strengths of their staff, model de-escalation tactics for staff, address and actively coach staff that present as overly punitive with youth or are generally disengaged from professional duties surrounding relationship and rapport building with youth.

Conversely, staff described that not all SDPOs function in this optimal way. Staff described that during shifts where supervisors "sit in their office all day" and interact very little with staff and youth, there are more instances of staff that appear to struggle to engage in positive rapport building with youth and less likely to be seen as a support to colleagues. *Probation line staff and supervisors alike shared a troubling view that there is not a unified Departmental standard nor training process to address expectations of the SDPO and that the sole responsibility of proactivity of the supervisor lies with the individual themselves, which results in a high level of disparity between the quality of services delivered during different shifts.* Reportedly, this lack of standardized expectations for supervisors was identified as a universal truth, and problem, throughout all of Probation's detention facilities, and was described as not unique to the 56-hour work week.

Since the other schedule commonly utilized in Probation detention facilities is a five-day, eight-hour schedule, some interviewees offered comparisons of the two schedules and the level of consistency provided by each. Individuals who viewed

the 56-hour schedule favorably highlighted their belief that being with a small set of Probation staff for a full day provides youth with a higher level of stability and safety throughout any given day. These individuals shared that the avoidance of daily staffing transitions helps to prevent safety issues caused by the loss of information that, in their experience, commonly happens in the rush of leaving an eight-hour shift. Interviewees reported that the staggered schedule on shift transition days allow staff working directly with youth to have a significant amount of time during their first day of the 56-hour work week to read any incident reports, other pertinent information that has been written in the "Red Book" or shift log that is used to document information, and to receive other verbal updates from outgoing staff. *Staff and supervisors alike reported that there are currently no departmental protocols in place for formal shift exchange meetings, and that communication is left entirely to supervisors and staff to coordinate for themselves. Some DPOs reported taking extra care to cultivate and maintain professional relationships with like-minded colleagues on other shifts to ensure ongoing and meaningful updates about youth, even via text on their off days. These staff reflected that they would like Probation to consider a more formalized shift exchange process to ensure that all staff have the information needed to ensure the safety and well-being of youth.*

Nearly all interviewees discussed shift transition issues and were asked to share their observations of the impact of the transition on youth and the variations in procedural and behavioral expectations of the changing shifts. Many discussed their perception that all transitions can be difficult for youth who are already experiencing separation from family, loss of their sense of control, and may have a limited set of coping skills. Most interviewees with a favorable view of the 56-hour schedule shared that fewer transitions in caregivers throughout the week was less stressful for youth and that three weekly transitions seemed imminently better than 24. Overall, these individuals viewed the care and supervision of youth as a team activity of staff working a 56-hour shift in each unit.

Interviewees that held primarily unfavorable views of the schedule discussed the perception of youth having limited access to their assigned case worker, who they identified as the primary support to the youth on their assigned caseloads. These interviewees spoke about care given to youth as an individual responsibility and indicated that consistency of program and routine should be set by the primary case worker. These interviewees believed that having access to this key support for three days instead of five put youth at a disadvantage due to inadequate guidance opportunities. Some also reported the impression that youth typically had fewer incidents and write ups on days when their assigned case worker was present. There was little acknowledgement of the assignment of "back up" staff meant to support youth during the primary case worker's time off, nor of supportive relationships with other interested and engaged staff available throughout the week.

*Wide discrepancies in line staff's understanding of their responsibilities currently contribute to the negative perception of staff performance, particularly by those well versed in the theories of best practice. Probation employees seem to lack an understanding of their role and the roles of their team members through the lens of best practices. Regardless of what schedule is used to staff detention facilities, line staff need to know the expectations in order to buy in and align themselves with a practice model. Probation staff, stakeholders, and youth need information about what is expected in theory and how actual practice plays out so that leadership can affirm services that should be replicated and can address practices that are not supportive of a therapeutic milieu. Youth opinions and experiences of care and engagement efforts by staff may help to illustrate a deeper understanding of practice and provide opportunities for much needed continuous quality improvement based on the feedback and outcomes of youth.*

### **Fatigue**

Fatigue experienced while working a 16-hour shift was discussed by nearly all interviewees. All interviewed, regardless of their views of the 56-hour work week, made some acknowledgment that working with teenagers with high safety and emotional needs is physically and emotionally exhausting. Probation staff and supervisors alike shared their experiences of the ways that different shifts and specifically, different supervisors, may mitigate or exacerbate that depletion. In the camps, supervisors are responsible for setting up a schedule where breaks, which for the purposes of this study will be defined as any time not spent directly with youth during the workday, are a regular part of the flow of each day. In some cases, these breaks are used for completing casework notes and court reports, and some of the break time is to be used for rest. Barring instances where safety risks and incidents that have occurred have ruled out the possibility of break times, staff with work experiences at different facilities described varied experiences with break scheduling. A few people described supervisors that aimed to rotate staff every two hours, with two hours of direct care to youth followed by two hours of a break from direct care. Additional interviewees shared their experience of having two and a half hours of face-to-face time with youth with an hour and a half break that followed. These arrangements were not limited to a specific facility nor supervisor. Probation staff discussed that with these types of arranged break schedules, fatigue does not cause performance issues for them or their colleagues.

Many interviewees described issues with scheduling that they had experienced directly or observed which contributed to physical and emotional fatigue for those providing direct care. Some people described breaks being irregular, while others described issues with some staff being skipped over or receiving less break time due to favoritism. Many DPOs discussed inequity of breaks occurring when the supervisor's "favorite" staff take liberty with taking more break time. While interviewing at one of the camp facilities, this was observed directly when an individual being interviewed was approached by another staff, whom she

proceeded to coach on how to advocate for a much-needed break. The interviewee reported that she observed this happen to her colleague on a regular basis because he was more passive than others and there was a recurrent issue with another staff member that got breaks first. *A majority openly acknowledged that without appropriate breaks, the quality of interactions with youth decreased, and corresponded with less collaboration between staff, and more punitive and unengaged behaviors observed in themselves and colleagues. Many interviewees, including supervisors themselves, discussed no formal training process for setting schedules that ensure appropriate, equitable, and restful breaks for line staff.*

### Implementation of the LA Model and Perceptions of the Homelike Environment

The lack of a unified understanding of best practice drives a large wedge into the expectations of front-line service delivery in the Probation Department. The interpretation of what it means to provide a "Homelike" or "Family-Like" environment has taken on a life of its own. In the Probation Governance Study, the "Family-Like" environment refers to consistency, positive rapport, atmosphere, and accommodations. When interviewing individuals either in favor or opposed to the elimination of the 56-hour work week, the phrase was often reduced to jargon and manipulated to support the individuals' views. For those in favor of the elimination of the schedule, the input was that in a home environment parents do not typically tend to their teenaged kids 16 hours a day, and that level of interaction was too difficult and overwhelming for even the highest quality, dedicated staff members to be able to maintain the highest level of care and professionalism throughout the day. Examples were provided illuminating the idea that some individuals may become "too comfortable" on the 56-hour schedule and may bring with them certain behaviors that might be ongoing in their own home environment but are not appropriate in the context of the professional caregiving environment. These staff behaviors of concern included rude tones, sarcasm, yelling, cursing, insults, and inappropriate discussions taking place in front of youth (wherein two staff members were romantically involved and discussions about it took place in front of youth).

Many of those opposed to the elimination of the schedule discussed their perception that being with youth for full days at a time, from waking them up in the morning to putting them to sleep at night, was the embodiment of a homelike setting. They reported that the continuity of care throughout a day allowed staff to see and understand the most nuanced needs and changes in the youth that not only created bonds with the youth, but also helped to maintain a safe environment for all. One safety factor that was highlighted repeatedly regardless of the opinion of the schedule was that having staff available at night on site was perceived as helpful to youth. After 10:00pm, if there is an incident in the unit, staff can be called back from their sleeping quarters to assist GSNs in settling the unit. Some interviewees discussed these incidents in terms of fights and other behavioral disturbances, but others described nighttime activation of trauma and other mental health related issues. Some individuals went further to share their understanding that due to the

trauma related needs of youth, night can be an especially difficult time for a young person and being responded to at night by a trusted, safe person helped youth return to a place of calm more quickly and without further escalation. Many interviews that espoused more benefits to the 56-hour work week did acknowledge that the emotional labor of supervising youth in detention is highly taxing work (See *Fatigue* and *Work/Life Balance* for more).

The diversity of both outstanding and inappropriate practice behaviors cited throughout interviews left the impression that there is a lack of communication of Probation's mission and values to staff, questionable effectiveness of current training programs, and missed opportunities for mentorship within the department. It was also noted by many Probation employees that due to the constant changes in leadership, piloting (and abandoning) departmental strategies for supervision, inadequate interdepartmental collaboration<sup>7</sup>, and overall confusion of the direction of the department, many staff are unclear about how they are supposed to respond to certain situations, noting that the most common form of on-the-job learning was to receive criticism of an intervention gone wrong. *Increased transparent communication between administration and front-line staff regarding the future of the department and performance expectations was requested by many interviewees as something they thought would provide relief to the high stress and low morale experience of feeling excluded and in fear of being phased out by the department.*



*Campus Kilpatrick*

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<sup>7</sup> Perceptions of DMH clinicians' role varied amongst Probation interviewees which reportedly bred dissatisfaction with clinicians' participation in youth care during crisis. Prior to this study, the POC received similar reports indicating that mental health staff often decline Probation staff requests to participate in verbal de-escalation of youth during crises.

The Probation Governance Study, Final Report states that the 56-hour work week needs to be eliminated because “the 56-hour work week schedule for Local 685 staff working at the Department’s juvenile camp facilities is inconsistent with best practices in juvenile facilities which highlight the importance of establishing a consistent family-like environment in which staff and youth work closely together to build positive relationships that can promote youth well-being.”<sup>8</sup> The Probation Governance Study set forth the following guidelines as the measure of best practice in detention facilities:<sup>9</sup>

<p><b>Safe and Developmentally Appropriate Juvenile Detention and Placement Facilities</b></p>	<p>Juvenile detention and placement facilities should be clean; meet fire and safety codes; have properly functioning temperature controls, light, and ventilation; and offer youth appropriate living conditions. Every effort should be made to ensure that the facilities do not look like or operate as jails, but rather as developmentally-appropriate environments conducive to the rehabilitate goals of the probation department.<sup>311</sup></p>
	<p>Detention and placement facilities should be physically reconfigured into welcome physical spaces at enables both staff and youth to feel safe and promotes behavioral and cognitive change.<sup>312</sup></p> <p>Key features to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group living in residential cottages with open, dormitory-style housing to accommodate “core groups” of 8-12 youths;<sup>313 314</sup></li> <li>• Cottages furnished with comfortable beds, amenities, and ample natural light and fresh air;<sup>315</sup></li> <li>• Living room areas and private restrooms;</li> <li>• Strong emphasis on a holistic Integrated Treatment Model; and,</li> <li>• Close proximity to youth’s communities.<sup>316</sup></li> </ul> <p>Collaborative, data-driven efforts should be made to reduce lengths of stay in detention and placement facilities. System-wide efforts probation should consider to reduce the length of stay in placement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement weekly detention case reviews where department staff and supervisors gather to review the status of each youth being held. If a case</li> </ul>

<sup>8</sup> [LAPGS\\_Final\\_Report.pdf \(rdaconsulting.com\)](#) Accessed May 4, 2022

<sup>9</sup> [Microsoft Word - LAPGS\\_Best-Practice\\_FINAL\\_20170410\\_STC.docx \(rdaconsulting.com\)](#) Accessed May 4, 2022

	<p>change is reported, action should be taken.<sup>317</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a position dedicated to tracking all cases in the system and expediting those suitable for earlier scheduling and release.</li> <li>• Reduce detention admissions resulting from probation violations and placement failures.<sup>318</sup></li> </ul> <p>Probation should also consider case processing reforms that expedite the flow of cases through the system, reduce lengths of stay in detention, expand the availability of non-secure program slots and ensure that interventions with youth are timely and appropriate. Probation should ultimately minimize youth placement in a secure pretrial detention facility, as research has shown that such placement has a negative impact on ultimate case outcomes.<sup>319</sup></p>
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*LAPGS, 2017 p60-61*

Most of the best practices outlined above appear to be largely unaffected by the 56-hour work week, with the possible exception that scheduling difficulty could occur for weekly detention case reviews for those staff working the Friday-Sunday schedule, if for any reason these meetings could not be held effectively during the weekend while other co-located partners from DMH, LACOE, and JCHS may be unavailable. The recommendation above from the Resource Development Associates, Inc specifically identified department staff and supervisors to be present, while the LA Model goes further to describe that weekly meetings are meant to take place as a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) meeting<sup>10</sup>.

<p><b>1. Multi-disciplinary team planning occurs with collaboration across agencies and at all levels.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) drive case planning and are structured to facilitate collaboration across multiple agencies. In order for this to be successful, all staff across all agencies must be trained in the therapeutic model (including kitchen staff, maintenance, teachers, probation officers, etc.). This necessitates cross-training that recognizes there is no separation of staff roles in supporting program goals. All direct care providers will be trained to support the therapeutic and rehabilitative components of the model and are expected to actively participate in the program.</li> <li>■ In order to successfully incorporate all programming elements in a holistic and integrated manner, staffing patterns and schedules will need to accommodate regular (weekly) multidisciplinary team meetings, and allow sufficient time for planning and debriefing activities.</li> </ul>
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*LA Model Policy Report, 2017 p9*

At Campus Kilpatrick, the one facility which has piloted implementation of the LA Model, the plan was originally for staff to work a less compressed schedule than the 56 hour-work week schedule, which was not meant to include sleeping time, to facilitate the LA Model. However, when it launched in 2017, the decision was made to keep all staff on the 56 hour-work week schedule (See *Provision and Maintenance of Living Quarters*). The current accommodation is to have some staff designated solely to case work while they continue to work a 56-hour schedule. *Further examination is needed to determine if youth who have completed a program at*

<sup>10</sup> [culture-of-care-long-final.pdf \(lacounty.gov\)](#). Accessed May 5, 2022

*Campus Kilpatrick have significantly better outcomes than youth who completed programs at other camp facilities, which would support a relationship between improved outcomes and implementation of the LA Model at Campus Kilpatrick with a 56-hour work week in place. If significant differences in outcomes are not found between facilities, Probation should reassess the use of a hybrid alternative (some staff on the 56 hour-work week and others not), or elimination of the schedule.*

As this research project developed during the Spring of 2022, the future of Campus Kilpatrick changed with the Board of Supervisors voting to make it one of two permanent sites for youth dispositioned to the "Secure Track" and to move the general camp population elsewhere.<sup>11</sup> The same Board motion named Camps Paige and Afflerbaugh as the new sites of the LA Model in the county, thus the issue of compatibility of the 56 hour-schedule with the LA Model will be determined in its continued use at Campus Kilpatrick with the new population and at Camps Afflerbaugh and Paige. It has not been determined whether staff working at the Secure Youth Track Facility (SYTF) at Campus Kilpatrick and Camp Scott will be on a compressed work week schedule or not.

### Case Work Opportunities and Effects

Probation staff assigned to the 56-hour work schedule have a caseload of youth assigned to them. They are to engage in case work with these youth during their work week to review the youth's current behaviors and functioning. This case work time is also meant to provide opportunities for rapport building that will lead to effective counseling and support the youth in making behavioral changes and reducing risk of recidivism. Caseworkers are also expected to participate (and coordinate, in some instances) in all MDT's and collab with partners/CBO's relating to special services (educational, like IEP/Regional Center referral, AB12, ILP, TAY/FSP or other care that may be needed. Staff on the 56-hour schedule have three days during which to meet individually with the youth assigned to their case load and to complete all corresponding paperwork, including court reports and transitional paperwork. These assigned staff are also expected and able to engage the parents of the youth into services as a means of better serving the youth and family as they navigate the camp detention experience. Staff may bring parents into a bi-directional exchange of information to support the youth in their camp program, as well as provide some counseling to parents aimed at helping the youth and parent to be successful in living together again after release from camp.<sup>12</sup>

As explored in the "Routine Consistency" section, disagreement about and varied perception of the role of the assigned Probation Officer was a recurrent theme across interviews. To review, some interviewees believed that the absence of the youth's assigned case worker four days a week was a disadvantage to youth in that

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<sup>11</sup> [Motion: Preparing for the Closure of the Division of Juvenile Justice: Secure Youth Track Facility Designation and LA Model Expansion March 15, 2022 \(lacounty.gov\)](#) Accessed May 15, 2022

<sup>12</sup> [Microsoft Word - RTSB - Parent Handbook \(lacounty.gov\)](#) Accessed May 16, 2022

there were too many missed opportunities for rapport building and counseling on behalf of the assigned probation officer. One interviewee reported that the quality of case work that happens on the 56-hour work week is inadequate for the purposes of rehabilitation. Other interviewees reported the exact opposite and stated their belief that the schedule allows for more meaningful rapport building with youth because staff can observe youth's moods and behaviors throughout the entire day which allows for a higher level of attunement to the youth's safety and well-being needs.

In almost all interviews, there was overwhelming feedback that training, coaching, and mentorship opportunities for direct services staff was lacking. This issue would appear to help account for a great deal of the discrepancies in the quality of services provided to youth. There is a perception that, given the absence of a clearly defined and communicated unified departmental standard, staff often are left to provide whatever level of service to which they are predisposed. Interviewees discussed a perception that some staff are simply more inclined to focus heavily on rapport building, verbal de-escalation tactics, hold the view that youth are being held accountable through their detainment, and are likely to identify the strengths in the youth they serve. These staff are recognized by colleagues and co-located department partners for having these abilities and are often relied upon to do the heavy lifting of providing supportive emotional labor to prevent crisis. Often, these staff go above what is required to provide programming and activities to youth to engage them into respectful and trusting relationships. These staff will seek out what they need to meet the needs of youth, regardless of the level of support, training, or feedback they receive from the department. Basically, there is broad agreement that these staff will have high quality interactions with youth, wherever they work and with whatever schedule they have because they have the internal motivation for it, not because they are being supported or guided by Probation to do so.

On the other hand, many line staff discussed concerns for colleagues who are not pre-disposed to facilitate deeper relationship and mentorship opportunities with youth. Since the department does not have a rigorous quality improvement process to measure performance beyond probation and annual performance evaluations, it is unknown whether these individuals could be trained and reinvigorated to participate in meaningful casework and rapport building activities. One interviewee described bearing witness to the following, "When staff are good, they're great. The kids seek them out and you even hear kids say things like 'My mom, my dad is going to be on tomorrow'. But when that relationship is not good, the kids are waiting for their PO to leave because that PO blocks them from getting support from other staff who like the kid and want to connect with them." *The perception that some staff utilize ineffective engagement strategies within Probation's detention facilities was universal, regardless of schedule. Interviews made clear that Probation has a responsibility to youth to remediate staff that are known to struggle in these duties*

*and if they are not able nor interested in doing more engagement focused work with youth, there should be a way to transfer them to other roles that would be a better fit. Probation also has a responsibility to its employees to set them up for success in their role by providing the appropriate knowledge, training, and supervision to function individually and on a team. This also brought about input from interviews that the promotion structure utilized by Probation, which dictates that staff begin their career journey in detention settings, is fundamentally flawed by assuming that anyone can serve detained youth effectively with the motivation of a paycheck alone. People need drive, skills, and support to do this work, and anything less will eventually lead to apathy, burnout, and attrition.*

### **Work/Life Balance and Promotion of Well-being**

The most common answers to the first interview question, "What are the benefits for staff to have a 56-hour work week?" were discussions of the importance of staff having sufficient time in between weekly shifts to participate in significant self-care, restore their energy, and have sufficient time to participate in other important relationships, most often indicating caregiving responsibilities of children or elderly family members. Probation interviewees discussed their experience that having four days in between shifts allowed them to participate in hobbies and pursue educational opportunities. Concerns were also expressed that some staff may have other full-time jobs on their off days that may impact their ability to be fully rested and mentally present while on the 56-hour work week. Meaningful feedback streamed in from interviewees who are not currently working the compressed schedule but did previously, describing their current levels of depletion, and even burnout, despite a stated commitment to continuing their work with detained youth, and a longing to return to the 56-hour schedule. Many Probation interviewees discussed at length that the needs of the youth have changed significantly over the years. Many discussed that in years past, one would finish their final day of the 56-hour work week and feel more physical fatigue due to different activities and sports programs that were in place. Now, staff report a major shift in the supervision responsibilities of staff in recognition of the amount of emotional labor and mental presence needed to provide a safer and emotionally regulated environment for youth who staff perceived to have significantly more mental health needs and trauma than the youth that were detained in years past.

Through the interview process, exploration into the question, "What does the Probation Department do to promote the well-being of staff to support the work that they are asked to do?" was an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of systemic acknowledgment of staff wellness needs and efforts on behalf of the department to promote wellness. Throughout therapeutic and counseling professions, there is an ideology that dynamics of a service provider and their client and that of the supervisor and supervisee have a bi-directional effect on one another

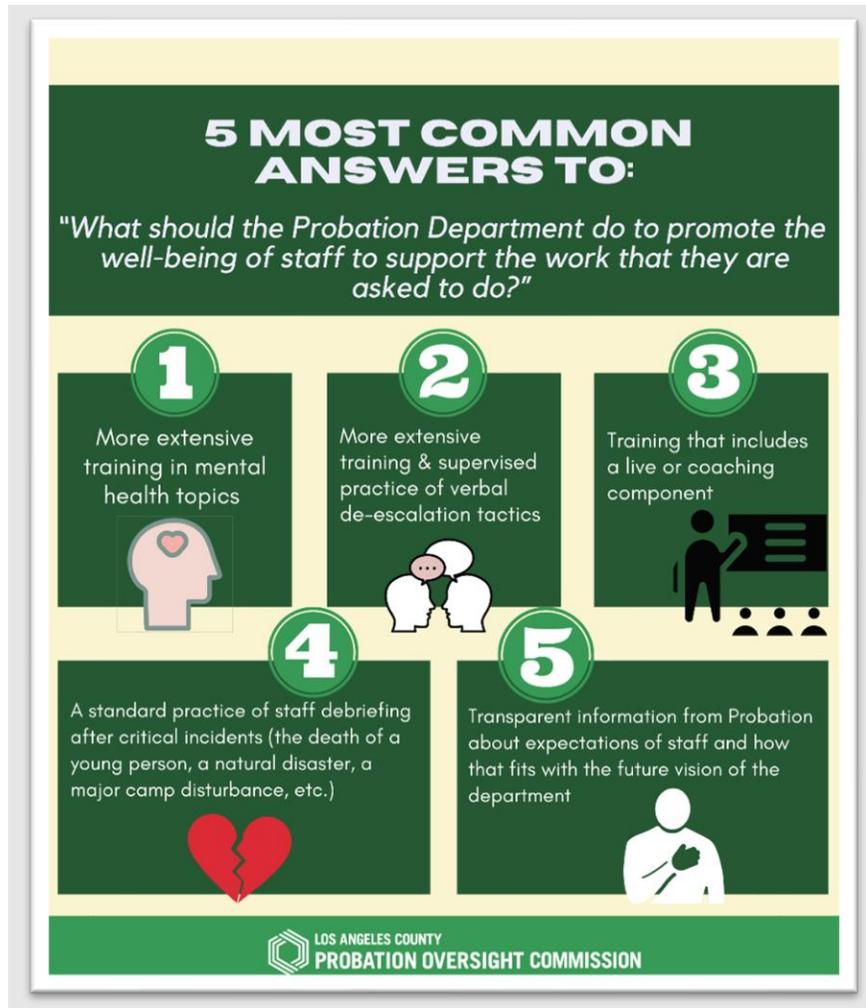
within a phenomenon called a “parallel process”<sup>13</sup>. The concept of the parallel process extends to conflict management within organizations and their staff, with the idea that positive and supportive interpersonal and leadership dynamics breed proactive work behaviors and that counterproductive work behaviors, both against the organization and colleagues is likely, “when faced with ineffective or absent leadership, rational or economic incentives to deceive others, injustices, and organizational distrust, among others.”<sup>14</sup> The goal for any Probation organization should be to provide respectful guidance to staff in ways that mirror the way the department would like staff to provide support to youth. The answers to this question of staff support from the Probation Department made it clear why such an extensive period of rest was viewed as necessary to engage in youth supervision work long-term. Individuals both within and outside of Probation reported an overall lack of support in the realms of mental and physical well-being, and insufficient levels and intensity of professional development activities at work and reported the need to use their time off for self-care activities. Many interviewees reported that professional support around these issues comes from direct supervisors if they are so inclined to address them and while some do, and other supervisors do not. Many interviewees acknowledged the emotional toll of the vicarious trauma staff take on when working with youth and the direct trauma they experience during the course of their work including assaults, participation in restraints, and learning of the tragic deaths of youth they cared about. A common thread of discussion was that employees recognized that after critical events occurred, they were offered the brochure from the Employee Assistance Program once, and then the topic was typically not raised again by supervisors nor leadership, despite what some described as obvious need.

Immediately following the discussion of support provided by Probation to encourage high quality engagement, supervision, and casework, the following question was explored with all interviewees: “What should the Probation Department do to promote the well-being of staff to support the work that they are asked to do?”

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<sup>13</sup> Searles, H. F. (1955). The informational value of the supervisor's emotional experiences. *Psychiatry: Journal for the Study of Interpersonal Processes*, 18, 135-146.

<sup>14</sup> Raver, Jana L. (2013). Counterproductive Work Behavior and Conflict: Merging Complementary Domains Negotiation & Conflict Management Research, Vol. 6 Issue 3, p151-159.

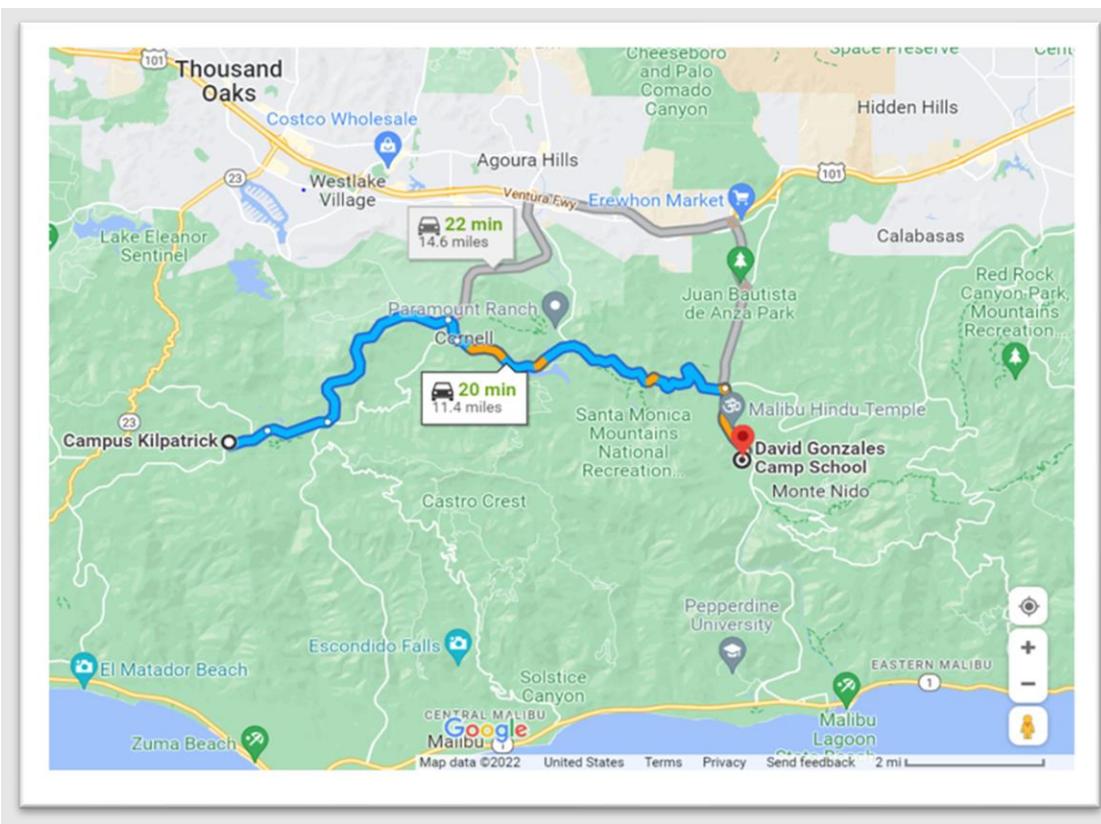


The above answers and nearly all other responses received, focused on tools to improve service delivery to youth through the promotion of staff well-being. Other less frequent suggestions included training support groups with DMH partners, Wellness Centers at each facility, physical activities organized and offered by Probation, educational and leadership opportunities, and acknowledgement of staff providing exemplary services. Some interviewees highlighted that they thought it would help the department and staff alike for Probation leadership to visit detention facilities more often to connect practice to policy and decision making.

**Provision and Maintenance of Living Quarters**

Probation incurs a major expense to provide sleeping quarters for staff on the 56-hour work week. Most of the camp facilities are aging and in need of renovation and deep cleaning, with staff quarters needing equal intervention. Accommodations were observed to be basic and reportedly acceptable for a restful nights' sleep, though some reflected that better mattresses would help. Interviewees reported varied levels of amenities available in their assigned room, the most important of which to staff was whether they had a desktop computer in their room to complete

paperwork at their discretion without having to wait for an available shared computer. The single outlier facility that did not appear to have issues due to age and use is the recently built Campus Kilpatrick, which nevertheless has a significant issue associated with its sleeping quarters. The initial plan was that Campus Kilpatrick would not be staffed using the 56-hour work week, and construction plans were utilized bearing that distinction from other facilities. Later, there was input considered from a from local fire department (See Emergency Preparedness) and negotiations between Probation and labor unions which failed to reach an agreement that would allow for a full-scale pilot of what services and engagement could look like if probation supervision staff were working a non-compressed work schedule. As a result, there is an inadequate number of rooms needed to accommodate the probation staff it takes to run the facility. Each night, some staff drive offsite to use Camp David Gonzales' sleeping quarters, which is approximately a twenty-minute drive away from Campus Kilpatrick at hours of low traffic. There is another detention facility next door, Camp Miller, that is not currently acceptable to house staff overnight and would require significant investment and renovation to bring it back from its current dilapidated state to become suitable for use.



*The Commute from Campus Kilpatrick to Camp Gonzales*

### Emergency Preparedness

Safety must be paramount when youth are in the custody and supervision of the county. Due to the location of all four active camps in areas known to be subject to fires and complicated accessibility, it was reported that one of the reasons for the existence of the 56-hour work week is the need to be able to mobilize an evacuation of youth at a moment's notice in the event of a natural disaster, including events caused by fire, earthquake, or wind. Currently, all Los Angeles County Probation camps<sup>15</sup> are located in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The most recent evacuations took place on January 23, 2022, when heavy winds caused damage to Camps Paige and Afflerbaugh. Youth were moved temporarily to Barry J. Nidorf Juvenile Hall, reportedly for one week, as the facilities required further evaluation to ensure safety prior to the return of youth and staff. Interviewees at these sites made reference not only to the most recent evacuation, but of other instances over the years



*Probation Camps and Dorothy Kirby Center 2022*

Almost all interviewees that had ever worked at Campus Kilpatrick shared thoughts on the importance of emergency preparedness and connected concerns to the

<sup>15</sup> Dorothy Kirby Center is not a camp, though it is part of the Residential Treatment Services Bureau.

Woolsey Fire that burned parts of the facility on November 9, 2018<sup>16</sup>. Individuals shared their experiences of quick coordination to evacuate all youth and staff as they observed the fire quickly approaching the camp. It was shared that during the planning for the staffing for Campus Kilpatrick, the local fire department was consulted, and recommendations were made to Probation administration to utilize an emergency responder schedule to ensure that evacuations would not be delayed due to staffing in the eventual occurrence of a fire. It was reported that sheltering in place on the field at Campus Kilpatrick is a safe option during a fire, and that information was determined by fire safety professionals. Despite this assertion, on the day of the Woolsey Fire, emergency evacuation occurred as staff made a judgment call as they feared for their own lives as well as that of the youth.

The County of Los Angeles is the most populous county in the United States of America and is ranked the 74<sup>th</sup> largest county in the contiguous 48 states of the United States of America<sup>17</sup>. To understand how other probation jurisdictions manage the staffing of their facilities to ensure emergency preparedness, contact was made with Probation jurisdictions that are larger in size than Los Angeles County or similarly populated and jurisdictions in or covering major urban centers. These contacts were made with the intention of establishing any utilization of the 56-hour work week or any other type of compressed work week that includes staff sleeping over at their assigned work facility. No jurisdiction reported current use of the 56-hour work week, nor a sleep-over component in their staff schedules. Many counties and state jurisdictions larger than Los Angeles County had facilities that were rather centralized to where people live, which was observed for example in San Bernardino County, the largest county in the contiguous 48 states where all three of their juvenile hall facilities are located within City of San Bernardino. Additionally, in some jurisdictions where facilities seemed to be a fair distance from population centers, traffic was less of a concern for delayed arrival of additional staff if they were to be needed in an emergency evacuation.

A single jurisdiction, the San Diego County Probation Department, reported use of the 56-hour work week previously, but has discontinued its use entirely. In 2018, San Diego Probation announced the closure of the last of its remote camp detention facilities in favor of a single, centrally located facility called "Urban Camp"<sup>18</sup>. It was reported that San Diego County switched the work schedules of all staff working at their detention facilities, two juvenile halls and the Urban Camp, to a different compressed work schedule which does not include sleeping over at an assigned facility. The schedule is referred to as the "5-2-2-5" which indicates that at the beginning of the two-week pay period, half the staff work five days in a row, then get two days off, come back and work two more days, and then have the following five days off. All workdays on the "5-2-2-5" are 12-hour shifts. The current continued

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<sup>16</sup> <https://wildfiretoday.com/tag/woolsey-fire/> Accessed May 17, 2022

<sup>17</sup> [List of the largest counties in the United States by area - Wikipedia](#) Accessed March 3, 2022

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.countynewscenter.com/tag/urban-camp/> Accessed May 5, 2022

use of a different compressed work schedule, and localized facilities, have alleviated much of the concern that San Diego County held previously when their detention facilities were primarily located in very high Fire Severity Zones<sup>19</sup>.

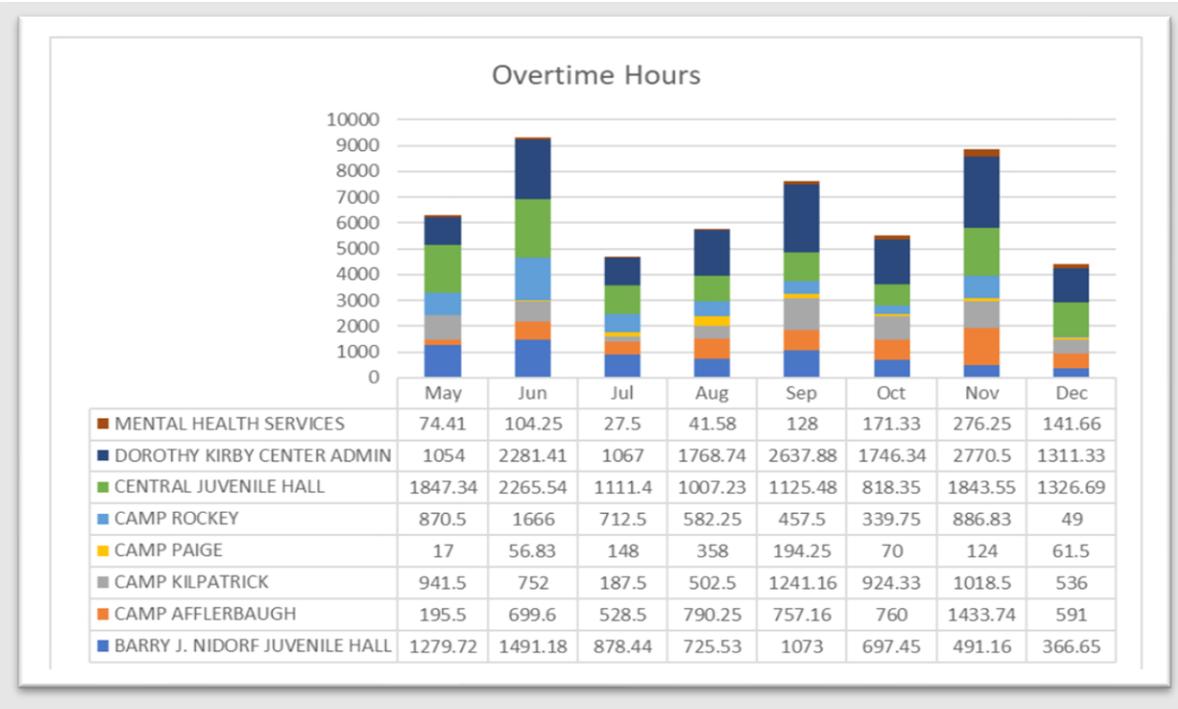
*Maintenance of adequate staffing to respond appropriately to the safety needs of youth and all others on grounds during emergency situations is a top priority for Los Angeles County Probation and is often listed as a primary justification for maintaining the 56-hour work week schedule. Due to the locations of camp facilities that currently utilize the 56-hour work week, the occurrence of natural disasters is inevitable, and planning has helped to prevent tragedy thus far.*

### Staffing Considerations

Adequate and quality staffing is a core issue in Probation's detention facilities that will help or hinder implementation of reform. At the outset of interviews, the 56-hour work week schedule was thought to be a staff recruitment tool, though through the course of interviews it was shared by many that they had gone through the application and testing processes with a desire to work with youth in the Probation Department without any awareness of the schedule's existence. It was reported by some that they did want to come to camps after working at the juvenile halls, primarily because it would be a promotion, and did perceive the eight hour shifts in the juvenile halls as a negative aspect of working in those facilities. The 56-hour work week was widely referenced within interviews as a powerful retention tool. Some interviewees reported that the schedule is a huge benefit for those that find it to balance with their after-work responsibilities and lifestyles (see *Work/Life Balance*), when they would have chosen to do this work regardless of schedule. Concerns were also voiced that the schedule has been too large of a factor in the retention of staff, particularly in the case of individuals who seem less willing to deliver youth-centered, trauma-focused services. *Findings of a causal relationship between the 56-hour work week and attrition prevention are inconclusive. It was also not possible to determine through interviews if the schedule helps to preserve staffing in a consistent manner or if it specifically affects the retention of those individuals more or less suited to the visions of a care-oriented Probation Department.*

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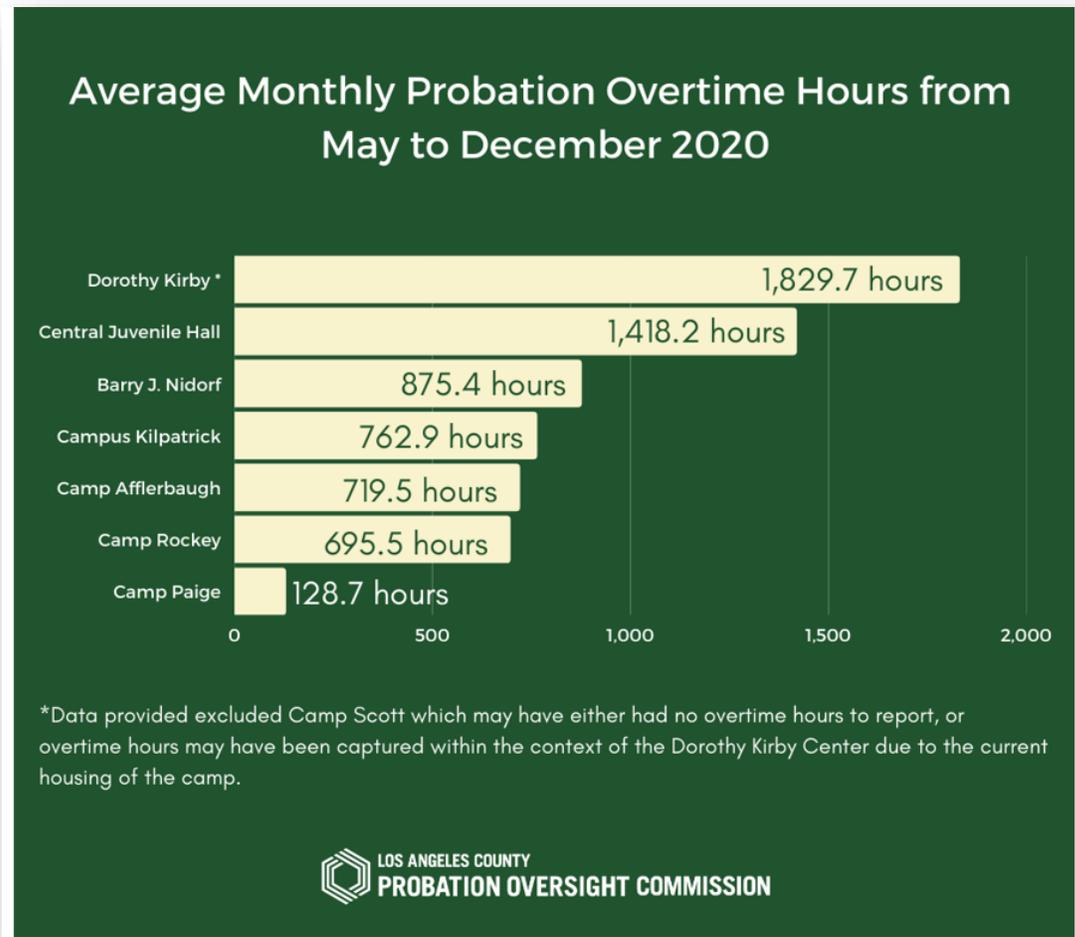
<sup>19</sup> [https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6789/fhszs\\_map37.pdf](https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/6789/fhszs_map37.pdf) Accessed May 7, 2022



*Overtime by Facility May-Dec 2020*

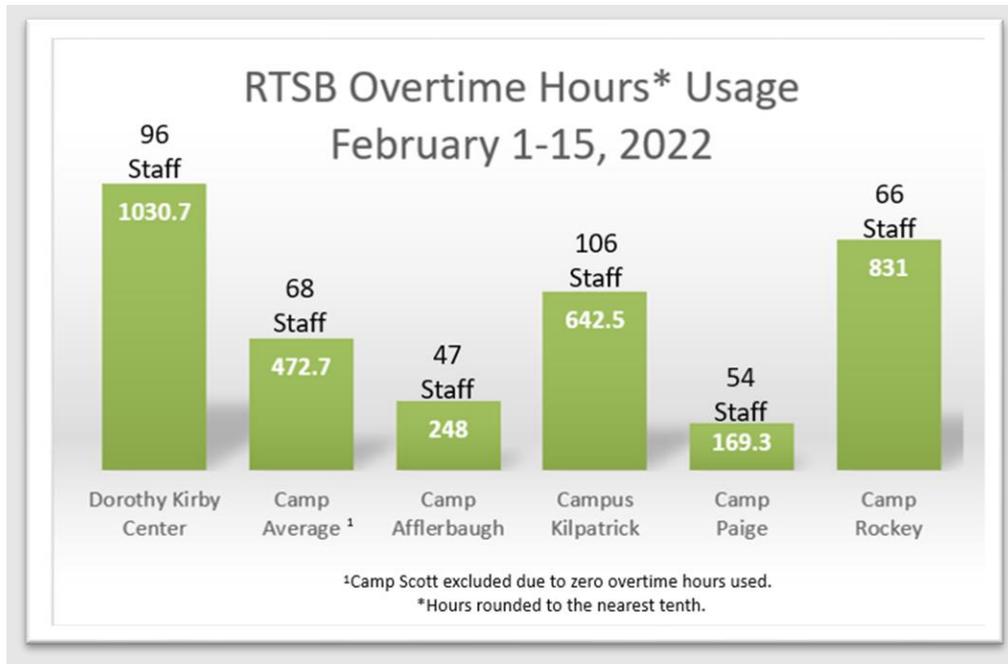
Unexpected staff absences for any reason cause disruption and inconsistency for youth and can be a significant barrier to establishing trusting, meaningful relationships which are meant to be one of the core interventions of the LA Model. Unexpected absences also cause additional responsibilities to be assigned to staff members of the affected unit, which may result in less time for engagement of youth, fewer opportunities for facilitating activities, and reduced or forgone break times. Many interviewees reported a perception that staff call outs and shortages are minimized with the use of the 56-hour work week used in the five Residential Treatment Services Bureau (RTSB) camps. In Probations’ report for Public Safety Deputies’ Briefing of February 24, 2021, data was provided in the chart above regarding the need for overtime hours at each facility from May-December 2020. While this information reflects the overall need for overtime due to staffing shortages for any reason and may reflect irregularities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the numbers reflect lower levels of overtime need at facilities utilizing the 56-hour work week.

Averaged monthly needs for Probation staff overtime during the May-December 2020 time frame ranked by facility\* from highest to lowest (rounded to the nearest tenth):



Facilities that utilized the 56-hour work week used on average at least one hundred hours of less overtime a month than those facilities that do not utilize the schedule during May-December 2020. Given the unique circumstances of the time period the data captures, it may be limited in its ability to be generalized to represent current callout trends and overtime needs of detention facilities.

To provide a more representative view of overtime use by facility, the Probation Department provided data for the two-week pay period of February 1-15, 2022.



When comparing RTSB sites only, the facility that utilized the greatest amount of overtime was again Dorothy Kirby Center, which is also the only site that does not utilize the 56-hour work week. It also seems relevant to note the number of active staff at each facility as it is understood that larger facilities have higher minimum staffing numbers for operation.<sup>20</sup> *Findings remain inconclusive as to whether there are fewer staff absences and unexpected call outs when the 56-hour schedule is utilized to staff detention facilities, though it appears that in both data sets provided, overtime is utilized at a much lower rate in similarly staffed facilities that have the schedule.*

### Health Implications of Shift Work

A thorough study of the 56-hour work week would not be complete without attention to research around health implications of working an intensely compacted work week. The 56-hour work week is a form of shift work, which is defined as any work schedule that includes hours outside of the typical 9-5pm schedule, from Monday through Friday. Shift work schedules may be fixed or rotating, and they have set start and end times that do not vary on a regular basis<sup>21</sup>. Due to the need to provide 24-hour supervision to youth in detention facilities, it should be clarified that in addition to each shift worked during the 56-hour work week, Probation’s eight-hour schedules that run from 6:00am-2:00pm, 2:00pm-10pm, and 10:00pm-6:00am are all also shift work schedules. To focus on the 56-hour work week,

<sup>20</sup> [ANNUAL FACILITY INSPECTION REPORT: 2021 submitted by the Los Angeles County PROBATION OVERSIGHT COMMISSION \(lacounty.gov\).](#)

<sup>21</sup> Perrucci, R., MacDermid, S., King, E., Tang, C.-Y., Brimeyer, T., Ramadoss, K., Kiser, S. J., & Swanberg, J. (2007). The significance of shift work: Current status and future directions. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, 28(4), 600-617.

research that paid some attention to compressed work week shift work was utilized as much as was available.

Interview feedback communicated that the most impactful health implication of the 56-hour work week is the positive effect it has on staff mental health to have four days between shifts (*See Work/Life Balance*). Research does support this perspective as multiple studies spanning law enforcement and health care professions show that individuals that do shift work on a non-rotating compressed schedule report being more rested than their colleagues that work in eight-hour intervals report<sup>2223</sup>. There is also evidence that many of the possible negative effects of shift work may be mitigated by an individual tolerance and choice to have this type of schedule<sup>24</sup>, which may be part of why some individuals are enthusiastic about and have few complaints about the schedule.

What research also supports is a common trend by those working a shift work schedule to underreport negative health consequences.<sup>25</sup> Concerns about fatigue (*See Fatigue*), mental health and disruptions to circadian rhythms are prevalent in shift work studies. There are conflicting results in the literature surrounding the mental health outcomes for shift workers. Some studies show shift workers to have increased risk of being diagnosed with a clinical mood disorder, while other studies claim that shift workers had “better psychological well-being and mental health than did non-shift workers”. The outcomes of studies around depression and anxiety in shift workers are likely affected by nuanced issues, like perceptions of job control, workplace social support, and health promotion programs in their workplaces and industries.<sup>26</sup> *The naming of such circumstances raises concern for the risk of poor mental health outcomes for those that work the 56-hour schedule because it was shared in interviews that very few of those mitigating factors are consistently part of their work experience.*

The most negative physical and mental health outcomes derived from shift work are associated with working overnight hours that specifically disrupt sleep. Additionally, any overtime while engaging in shift work on a compressed work week is identified as detrimental, whether that comes in the form of an extra day of work or additional hours tacked on to the end of the day. Working overtime at night may contribute to significantly inadequate sleep quality linked to a clinical diagnosis of Circadian

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<sup>22</sup> Vila, B., Morrison, G. B., & Kenney, D. J. (2002). Improving shift schedule and work-hour policies and practices to increase police officer performance, health, and safety. *Police Quarterly*, 5(1), 4-24.

<sup>23</sup> Amendola, K. L., Weisburd, D., Hamilton, E. E., Jones, G., & Slipka, M. (2011). An experimental study of compressed work schedules in policing: Advantages and disadvantages of various shift lengths. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 7(4), 407-442.

<sup>24</sup> Barton, J. (1994). Choosing to work at night: A Moderating influence on individual tolerance to shift work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol 79(3) pp. 449-454

<sup>25</sup> Spelten, E., Barton, J., & Folkard, S. (1993). Have we underestimated shiftworkers' problems? Evidence from a 'reminiscence' study. *Ergonomics*, 36, 307-312.

<sup>26</sup> Torquati, L.; Mielke, G. I.; Brown, W.; Burton, N.W.; Kolbe-Alexander, T. L. (2019) Shift work and poor mental health: A meta-analysis of longitudinal studies. *American Journal of Public Health*. Vol 109 (11), p13-20.

Rhythm Wake Disorders, Shift Work Type.<sup>27</sup> One reason for an organization to utilize a compressed work week schedule is to prevent the regular overtime that eight-hour day shift workers are often subject to while allowing for more recovery time between work weeks. Therefore, working any overtime on regular days off is contraindicated and may compound into physical fatigue and even lead to burn out.<sup>28</sup> Interviewees reported that at times, staff are called back from their sleeping quarters at night to settle disruptions in their assigned unit, and that was seen as something positive to help youth deescalate and to feel safe. Meanwhile, this act may eventually negatively affect staff on the 56-hour shift. During the course of interviews, it was shared that Probation has a policy to limit overtime, reportedly because in the past there were people working excessive overtime and it was problematic for alertness and enthusiasm for the work. According to Probation's Policy Manual, "Employees cannot work more than 24 hours of overtime in any one calendar week and/or more than 96 hours in any one calendar month." *Given the research findings that any overtime may put staff at higher risk for poor physical and mental health outcomes, current Probation policy is at odds with supporting staff wellness. Further research to understand any impacts of outside employment is also needed on an individualized basis to understand how that may affect staff well-being and work performance.*

### The Youth Interview

Although only one young person with lived experience volunteered to interview for this study, lessons from that interview were plentiful and need to be highlighted with the understanding that any youth willing to provide insight on their lived experiences in detention is likely representative of many others. This young person had detention experiences both in the juvenile halls and at two separate camp facilities that utilize the 56-hour work week schedule. The young person reported that there were individual staff members at all facilities that put effort and care into getting to know and supporting him. Conversely, he shared that there were also staff at each facility that "didn't really care" or showed minimal to no interest in doing any relationship building beyond what was needed to enforce order throughout the course of their shift. The youth perceived that staff were free to engage youth however much they were internally motivated to do so and that there was a wide range of inconsistency in staff behaviors toward youth. Interestingly, this same perception was shared by many other interviewees (see *Case Work Opportunities and Effects*). The youth reflected that the 56-hour work week seemed to have minimal impact on staff attitudes and behaviors toward youth and perceived that facility ambience is what made the biggest difference overall. A direct correlation was drawn by the youth between "ugly environments that made people feel okay to act ugly but in nicer places, staff had better moods and were nicer to

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<sup>27</sup> American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing.

<sup>28</sup> Smizinski, M. (2015) Shift Work and Law Enforcement. *Journal of Law Enforcement*. Vol. 5 Issue 2, p1-8.

kids". The youth also reported that DMH presence and positive relationships with Probation staff had a positive effect on the way those staff supervised youth. He reported that at camp, there were fewer instances of staff delaying the fulfillment of youth requests for phone calls and information until they are forgotten and followed through on their word more often than at juvenile hall facilities and attributed that difference to the schedule. *While input from more young people would be optimal, the 56-hour work week may not have been perceived as a high priority issue worthy of their time. The observations of disparity in engagement, demoralizing facility environments, and the importance of partnerships to encourage more positive supervision behaviors affirm core reform goals set forth by the LA Model.*



Staff walks with youth at Campus Kilpatrick

# RECOMMENDATIONS

To study the 56-hour work week, the POC set out to understand, in-depth, the reasons behind calls to eliminate the 56-hour work week and the opposing stance that the schedule should be maintained. At the core of this work is the POC's duty to pursue information which will lead to impactful decision making and policy that supports a Care-First approach to serving young people detained within the facilities where the 56-hour work week is utilized. The POC is cognizant of the vulnerability of detained individuals. Within the process of interviewing and researching the 56-hour work week, as different perspectives of merits and flaws emerged, the interest of the POC to make a sweeping recommendation for or against the continued use of the schedule diminished. What emerged instead is a realization that the 56-hour schedule in itself is not as impactful on services as any number of core systemic issues identified in the findings of this study that clearly impact the quality and consistency of services delivered to young people daily by Probation staff. In addition, the POC found that there are numerous gaps in pertinent data because Probation has not conducted its own analysis of the impact of the schedule on staff or youth outcomes. Thus, the following 10 recommendations fall into two categories: the first three recommendations are those that universally impact all facets of service delivery across the Residential Treatment Services Bureau (camps and DKC) and Detention Services Bureau (juvenile halls), followed by seven recommendations that pertain specifically to the 56-hour work week.

## *1. A CLEAR SET OF DEPARTMENTAL GOALS INCLUDING A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF SERVICES SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO STAFF.*

Many Probation staff reported that they know that changes are coming to the department but could not verbalize an understanding of what that means for the way they work directly with youth. Gaining an understanding directly from leadership, which helps to prevent gossip or hearsay, would serve to raise low morale by letting staff know that they are a valued part of the organization. Many staff communicated feeling excluded by Probation Department leadership at headquarters and spoke to their perceptions that leadership do not have an understanding of the practice occurring now within camp facilities. Some staff talked about their desire to have a future in the Probation Department, but not knowing if the department was interested in having them stay. Allowing staff to know about the future plans and changing practice expectations could be a restorative act, made in good faith, that communicates a desire to bring employees along for the journey of change. Sharing plans may also help to alleviate the fear that some hold that they will be cast away and could increase confidence and alliance between staff and department leadership. Furthermore, this would afford

staff the dignity to consider how they see themselves playing a role in the future of the department.

***2. A COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING AND COACHING PROGRAM WITH A CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROCESS SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED FOR ALL STAFF WORKING WITH YOUTH IN DETENTION.***

Wide discrepancies in the quality of services provided to young people in detention warrant a call to action for the department to (1) identify a practice model with corresponding baseline practice standards; (2) train all staff in those standards both in classroom and work environments; and (3) include regular opportunities for on-the-job coaching. The current DOJ required training for the Detention Services Bureau (DSB) staff who work in the juvenile halls has translated into increased on-site training for RTSB staff working at the camps. Many interviewees acknowledged the new trainings as a step in the right direction and an improvement over what was provided in years past, but it was repeatedly reported that on-the-job support is needed to encourage practice of skills learned in trainings to provoke consistent and lasting change in the quality of services delivered to youth. Additionally, a formalized continuous quality improvement process is needed to affirm the work of those staff that consistently meet and exceed practice standard expectations and to identify individuals that need more support to effectively work with youth.

***3. EXPECTATIONS OF SDPOS TO MODEL AND MEASURE PRACTICE BEHAVIORS MUST BE CLARIFIED AND STANDARDIZED.***

Staff practice discrepancies could not exist without supervision discrepancies. Probation must clarify expectations of SDPOs around their responsibility to model appropriate practice behaviors and to provide a level of interactive supervision to staff which will allow for regular and honest assessment of staff performance and adherence to best practice behaviors. Regular assessment of staff performance by supervisors is key to improving the accuracy of measurement in Annual Performance Evaluations, which have implications for both promotion, remediation, and discipline. Reports that some SDPOS are not taking an active role in mentoring staff who may need support because they choose not to is troubling and may ultimately result in unsafe conditions for youth and staff alike.

***4. FORMALIZED SHIFT EXCHANGES ARE NEEDED AT THE BEGINNING/END OF THE 56-HOUR WORK WEEK TO ENSURE STANDARDIZED TRANSFERS OF INFORMATION.***

Exchange of information is a basic standard of keeping a safe environment in a detention facility. At present day, many staff are relying on personal relationships that they have and maintain for the sole purpose of receiving information they otherwise might not receive when they come to work. Information sharing should

not be contingent on friendships at work, it needs to be a dependable procedure that isn't left to chance. A formalized exchange between 56-hour shifts would serve to decrease issues with consistency and allow staff to have more opportunities for peer-to-peer learning.

***5. THE PROBATION DEPARTMENT NEEDS A STANDARDIZED TRAINING AND PROTOCOL FOR ANY EMPLOYEE THAT MAY BE TASKED WITH SETTING THE SCHEDULE FOR STAFF DUTIES AND BREAKS ON THE 56-HOUR SCHEDULE.***

Consistency of scheduling is needed to ensure equity and regularity of breaks amongst staff on a 56-hour schedule. Whether for supervisors or DPOIs, all staff that are going to be setting the schedule for staff duties and breaks on the 56-hour schedule should have training on how to do so in a way that prioritizes equity amongst staff. Standardization and requirement of training will help to decrease inconsistencies in schedule setting that contribute to missed breaks and end of day fatigue. Having a standardized schedule protocol may also help to raise morale in facilities because standardization of breaks, when possible, may help to decrease perceptions of favoritism between schedule setters and certain line staff. A unified probation protocol really needs to be put into place to ensure that staff have restful breaks whenever it is safe to do so, with the understanding that staff well-being is a key component to ensuring a high quality of care for youth.

***6. PROBATION'S OVERTIME AND OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT POLICY SHOULD BE REVIEWED AND AMENDED TO ALIGN WITH RESEARCH TO DECREASE RISK OF POOR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES WITH COMPRESSED WORK WEEKS.***

The 56-hour work week is the most compressed full time work schedule possible. Having four days off after three intense days of work is understood to be the necessary recovery time for working such a compressed schedule. Without sufficient recovery time, staff are at higher risk for poor physical and mental health outcomes, especially if they habitually forgo restful periods. While it may be appropriate for Probation to offer overtime hours to staff on a compressed work week in an emergency situation, current policy allows staff to work up to 24 pre-approved overtime hours a week on an ongoing basis, up to 96 hours a month. This policy is inappropriate for the schedule and may contribute to fatigue, inadequate supervision of youth, burn out, and attrition. In addition to reviewing the policy, the department and its supervisors need to engage in individual reviews of habitual overtime, as well as the impacts of outside employment, on job performance in a meaningful way.

### *7. REGULAR EVALUATION OF STAFFING LEVELS NECESSARY TO RESPOND TO EMERGENCIES AND EVACUATION.*

Probation staff have done an excellent job of keeping youth safe during extreme weather events that have happened in the last five years. As populations in detention facilities drop, reevaluation of staffing levels necessary to conduct evacuations in an emergency to understand whether fewer staff on the 56-hour work week are required on site at the camps overnight. This type of regular evaluation allows the possibility for a reduction in the number of staff sleeping quarters needed at each facility and the chance to pilot other work schedules that do not include sleeping at a facility.<sup>29</sup>

### *8. FURTHER RESEARCH IS REQUIRED TO DETERMINE THE 56-HOUR WORK WEEK'S IMPACT ON UNEXPECTED ABSENCES, LEAVES OF ABSENCE, OVERTIME, AND STAFF RETENTION.*

A data request was made to the Probation Department regarding unexpected absences, leaves of absence, and overtime for the last six months at the juvenile halls and camps, but the request was not fulfilled. From the information that was provided, which unfortunately was outdated and may not be able to be generalized because it captured some of the first months of the COVID-19 pandemic, it did appear that facilities which utilize the 56-hour work week required fewer instances of overtime hours than facilities that do not utilize the 56-hour work week. In addition to the fiscal impact, fewer overtime hours signify fewer disruptions in routine for youth detained in these facilities because that would imply that there are fewer call outs and leaves of absences. Additional data is needed from Probation to determine current and past overtime patterns and absenteeism across facilities that allows for proper comparison between halls and camps.

Determinations about staff retention and attrition due to the 56-hour shift were also inconclusive and are not points that can be easily proven. These concepts are often raised in criticism of the schedule to imply that the 56-hour work week is powerful enough to retain staff who are solely interested in maintaining the work schedule, and not interested in working with detained youth, implying that the schedule has supported an environment of mediocre services. The POC acknowledges that the 56-hour schedule may be helpful in the retention of staff who find that a highly compressed work week fits their lifestyle. However, through information gathered in interviews and peer-reviewed research, the POC has no evidence that the schedule alone is enough to retain staff that truly have no other interest in the work or intrinsic motivation to work with youth.

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<sup>29</sup> It was reported that DMH does not have an overnight presence to assess mental health of youth in crisis during those hours. This decreases the perception of partnership and reinforces an idea of Probation staff having sole responsibility to manage crises for detained youth.

**9. IN ORDER TO DETERMINE PROBATION'S ABILITY TO FULLY IMPLEMENT THE LA MODEL WITH THE CONTINUED USE OF THE 56-HOUR WORK WEEK, ASSESSMENT MUST TAKE PLACE AROUND THE ABILITY OF THOSE ON THE 56-HOUR SHIFT TO MEANINGFULLY PARTICIPATE IN PLANNING, MEETINGS, AND ACTIVITIES THAT AFFECT YOUTH.**

Probation is on the precipice of another roll out of the LA Model at Camps Afflerbaugh and Paige and has expressed intent to implement variations of the LA Model at all Probation facilities. Although the LA Model was initially piloted at Campus Kilpatrick, negotiations resulted in what was described as a "casework model", a staffing hybrid in which all Probation staff remained on a 56-hour shift with some staff only providing supervision while other staff are caseworkers, specifically tasked with the engagement of youth in counseling-focused activities and participation in MDT meetings. Evaluation of the LA Model as implemented at Campus Kilpatrick suggested that the rates of rearrest and the length of time before arrest was a positive sign.<sup>30</sup> With the implementation of the LA Model and Camps Afflerbaugh and Paige, Probation will need to determine if they will use a hybrid staff structure or if they will place those staff providing case work on either a non-compressed (five days, forty hours a week) or less compressed work schedule (four-10 hour days, etc.) Probation must assess the ability of staff working a 56-hour work week to fulfill the role set out within the model's expectations including that of planning and participating in regular MDTs, the recommended weekly Individualized Rehabilitation Plan (IRP) meetings meant to determine possibilities of early release, and any other expected counseling duties, including journaling activities.

In the course of learning about the 56-hour work week and its effects on the implementation of the LA Model and its corresponding activities, the POC needs to express reservations about the expansion of duties of supervision staff. Plans are rolling out to train Probation staff to facilitate journaling activities with youth as part of their program. At this time, it seems inappropriate to have supervision staff, who may need to restrain youth to maintain a safe environment, to then facilitate youth participation in journaling and other counseling activities. These roles are diametrically opposed and risks placing youth in an emotionally unsafe and vulnerable position that could negatively affect their mental health. Furthermore, if participation in journaling and other counseling activities are part of the required program, a youth's refusal to confide in someone that they find to be emotionally unsafe may negatively affect their path to freedom. The juxtaposition of these two roles widens the already large scope of responsibility of staff who report a lack of clarity of their current roles. Probation staff that are tasked with counseling roles and implementation of the LA Model should not be the same staff that are supervision focused.

<sup>30</sup> [Microsoft Word - LA Model Final Report Merged.docx \(evidentchange.org\)](#) Accessed May 18, 2022

If Probation completes an assessment of the impact of having all Probation staff at the camp detention facilities on the 56-hour schedule and determines it is not conducive to the full implementation and participation in the above tasks to create and maintain the therapeutic milieu prescribed by the LA Model, then, at minimum, tasks that fall outside of the scope of supervision duties need to be facilitated by those not on a 56-hour schedule. This calls for a reduction in the scale of the use of the 56-hour work week, either through the use of a hybrid model, or the preferred path forward: to have Probation focus the scope of its line staffs' duties rather than expand them, and to yield counseling duties to other Los Angeles County Departments or Community Based Organizations that are already delivering these types of counseling and case management services and are well qualified to do so.

*10. PROBATION NEEDS TO NEGOTIATE A PLAN FOR THOSE STAFF WHO ARE EITHER NOT WILLING OR INTERESTED IN IMPLEMENTING PRACTICE CHANGE THAT ALIGNS WITH PROVIDING A THERAPEUTIC SETTING FOR DETAINED YOUTH.*

Supervising detained youth is incredibly challenging work, and that much more so when job duties are changing to align with new research, influencing new perceptions of the needs and rights of detained youth. As stated in so many interviews, this work is not for everyone. However, Probation has set up its promotion structure such that individuals with little interest or long-term investment to work specifically with youth in residential treatment all must take a rotation in order to promote. Reportedly, individuals in this situation trudge through the work until they either promote to Field Services or leave the Probation Department. After ample training, coaching, supervision performance guidance, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities, there must be a labor-negotiated option that allows for timely re-assignment of work duties to those individuals who are either not interested or willing to align their practice behaviors directly with the creation of the therapeutic milieu. The Probationary and Annual Performance Evaluation processes should integrate qualitative measurements of practice performance into the rating of "Quality" as a method of reaffirming and praising optimal practices as well as acknowledging any actions that do not align with best practices, which will allow for remediation. If attempts to realign a struggling staff member with practice standards repeatedly fail, and non-therapeutic, non-engaged, or harmful behaviors become a pattern, the department has a responsibility to remove those staff to protect the well-being of youth and Probation colleagues who end up doing emotional labor to compensate and repair rapport after damaging interactions. The full implementation of the LA Model is an undertaking that has the potential to benefit both youth and staff and should not be obstructed by behaviors and actions that do not align with the vision of a more uma-responsive Probation Department.